

Message Text

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SUBJECT: VISIT OF UNDP ADMINISTRATOR BRADFORD MORSE TO
69TH FAO COUNCIL

REF: ROME 11380

1. ADMINISTRATOR MORSE ARRIVED ON SCHEDULE LATE MORNING JULY 14 FOR PRIVATE LUNCHEON WITH DG SAOUMA, WHICH WAS REPORTED BY FAO AND UNDP DEPUTY AA JOSEPH ALIKE AS FRANK AND FORTHRIGHT. MORSE APOLOGIZED TO SAOUMA FOR JUNE 8TH LETTER TO UNDP RES REPS CRITICAL OF SAOUMA'S NEW PROPOSALS FOR A TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAM AND A SOMEWHAT GREATER INDEPENDENCE FOR FAO COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES. MORSE AND SAOUMA PLEDGED TO EACH OTHER A FUTURE RELATIONSHIP OF FRANKNESS AND CONTINUING DIALOGUE, INCLUDING EARLY AGREEMENT ON CERTAIN CHANGES PROBABLY NECESSARY IN EXISTING UNDP FAO AGREEMENTS.

2. ADMINISTRATOR MORSE ADDRESSED FULL FAO COUNCIL AT AFTERNOON SESSION. HE ADDRESSED WIDE RANGE OF MANAGEMENT AND
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FINANCIAL ISSUES CONFRONTING UNDP, BUT INDICATED THAT UNDP

WAS ON MUCH FIRMER FOOTING AND THAT RESOURCES FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED AND OTHER POOR COUNTRIES WOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER IN THE SECOND UNDP PROGRAMMING CYCLE COMMENCING JANUARY 1977. MORSE REVIEWED VITAL ROLE FAO PLAYS IN ALL ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURE AND ITS CRITICAL ROLE AS EXECUTING AGENCY FOR OVER \$1 BILLION IN PROJECTS FINANCED BY UNDP AND ITS PREDECESSOR AGENCIES. ADMINISTRATOR MORSE FURTHER REVIEWED HIS FIVE BASIC REORGANIZATION STEPS: (1) CONSOLIDATION WITHIN UNDP OF THE PROGRAM FINANCE AND TREASURY FUNCTIONS, (2) A MORE EFFECTIVE FINANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, (3) A TARGET REDUCTION IN PROGRAM AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS, INCLUDING WAYS TO LESSEN THE RATE OF INCREASE IN COST OF EXPERTS, (4) THE NEW STANDBY AUTHORITY FOR LIMITED SHORT-TERM BORROWING, AND (5) THE NEW MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE FOR COUNTRY EXPENDITURE CEILINGS ALREADY SET FOR 1977 AND REQUIRING FULL EXECUTING AGENCY SUPPORT.

3. DG SAOUMA, IN COUNCIL, RESPONDED GRACIOUSLY AND POSITIVELY TO ADMINISTRATOR MORSE'S SPECIAL VISIT TO ROME. HE UNDERScoreD PERFECT TIMING OF THE VISIT AND HIS PLEDGE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH UNDP AT ALL LEVELS AND WITHIN THE PARTNERSHIP SPIRIT OF THE 1970 CONSENSUS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED AGAIN THAT THE UNDP RES REP WAS PRIMUS INTER PARES IN MATTERS RELATING TO THE COORDINATION OF UN DEVELOPMENT INPUTS AT THE FIELD LEVEL.

4. ASSISTANT DG YRIART SUMMARIZED BRIEFLY THE RESOURCES AND LIQUIDITY DIFFICULTIES OF UNDP IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING DEPARTURE OF MORSE AND SAOUMA FROM COUNCIL CHAMBER. YRIART STRESSED REALITY OF SLIGHT DOWNWARD UNDP FUNDING OF FAO PROGRAMS FROM OVER \$130 MILLION IN 1975, AN ESTIMATED \$120 MILLION IN 1976 TO A CONSERVATIVE FORECAST OF \$107 MILLION IN 1977. HE REFERRED TO THE LIKELIHOOD OF A FURTHER REDUCTION IN FAO EXPERTS FROM 1,642 FUNDED BY UNDP CURRENTLY TO APPROXIMATELY 1,460 IN 1977. SOME OF THESE 180 EXPERTS WOULD BE ABSORBED IN OTHER PROGRAMS OF FAO. SEEMINGLY SATISFIED WITH THE MORSE-YRIART STATEMENTS, NO MEMBER DELEGATION COMMENTED AND DISCUSSION OF THE UNDP LIQUIDITY ISSUE ENDED ON A POSITIVE AND SOMEWHAT HOPEFUL NOTE. VOLPE

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